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**Codicil to the Attendance Policy in Quality Handbook Section 14: Covid-19 Contingency**  
**Issued 22 September 2020**

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**Principles and extraordinary measures to support student engagement in a blended learning experience in 2020/21**

**1) Introduction**

- a. This codicil is an addendum to Quality Handbook (QH) Section 14: Learning and Teaching which aims to set out additional aspects of the University's student attendance policy specifically in the context of blended learning from September 2020. The codicil does not apply to fully online courses and these courses should continue to use QH Section 14.
- b. The principles and requirements for student attendance monitoring as outlined in QH Section 14 still apply. NTU courses are designed so that engagement in timetabled classes is an essential element towards achieving each course's learning outcomes. Student attendance monitoring is essential so that the University can provide appropriate support and interventions to individual students where attendance is low.
- c. As indicated in QH Section 14, the purpose of attendance monitoring at NTU is primarily to:
  - support individual students by making sure that they have the opportunity to engage with all of the course's learning outcomes;
  - help students to understand and subsequently manage their own engagement better;
  - transmit high expectations of student attendance and engagement;
  - ensure Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies requirements are met;
  - provide evidence for student references and in cases of student complaints;
  - inform the University's understanding about transition and engagement.
- d. Schools are required to develop attendance policies that set out the expectations and criteria for student attendance at scheduled teaching events within the broad framework of the principles outlined in QH Section 14: Learning and Teaching. School-level attendance policies must be adapted to be in line with this codicil.

**2) Principles**

- a. The University has carefully designed learning and teaching in 2020/21 to provide a high-quality student experience and support student achievement amidst COVID-19 related challenges and restrictions. The University is offering a blended learning experience in 2020/21 wherein timetabled learning activities are delivered both on-campus and online<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Online activities can be synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous learning refers to a learning activity in which a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time. Asynchronous learning refers to a learning activity that does not occur in the same place or at the same time.

- b. Student attendance in all timetabled learning activities (i.e. on-campus and/or online) and engagement with non-timetabled online learning activities are essential towards achieving each course's learning outcomes.
- c. Individual poor attendance at on-campus and online sessions and lack of engagement with online material often poses a risk to student progression and attainment, and an indicator of broader issues. The University endeavours to support students where attendance and/or engagement is low.
- d. On-campus and online activities are carefully designed to provide a quality experience for a specific cohort of students. Hence, poor attendance at and engagement with these activities will have a negative impact on the student experience, both for those who are and are not in attendance at timetabled sessions.
- e. Specific courses are designed to include on-campus and online sessions in order to meet the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements. Students on courses with attendance requirements set out by PSRBs may not be able to gain professional accreditation if their attendance does not meet the standard set by the PSRB.
- f. Course handbooks and/or NOW course learning rooms define the specific requirements of the course including the expectations to students about attendance and engagement.

### **3) Requirements**

- a. The University has put in place extensive adjustments to the campus and to learning and teaching to ensure that all students and staff are able to attend safely.
- b. Students who are unable to attend on-campus sessions for valid reasons related to COVID-19 (detailed below) must:
  - not come onto campus for any reason, unless they live on campus in which case, they must not leave their accommodation;
  - complete the [NTU Coronavirus](#) tracker to be used for tracking students who are self-isolating and as evidence for non-attendance and/or a notification of extenuating circumstances (where applicable);
  - inform their course administrator that they are unable to attend; continue to engage with online learning materials and activities, where possible;
  - seek appropriate guidance and support from their course leader / tutor (reasonable adjustments and support can be provided where feasible).
- c. The following are COVID-19 related valid reasons for non-attendance at on-campus sessions:
  - Have COVID-19 symptoms and are awaiting a test or have been tested positive. If tested negative, a student must keep self-isolating for the rest of the 14 days from when they were last in contact with the person who has coronavirus – as they could get symptoms after being tested, in line with [NHS guidance](#).
  - Self-isolation because a member of the same household has a positive COVID-19 test.

- Self-isolation due to close contact with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test.
  - Quarantine due to arriving in the UK from a non-travel corridor country.
  - Live in an area subject to local COVID-19 restrictions that preclude attendance.
- d. Where a student is unlikely to be able to attend timetabled session(s) for a protracted period of time (e.g. beyond a 2-week self-isolation period) and/or the absence runs over a time of assessment then they should contact their personal / academic tutor or course leader to discuss this. They will then be counselled as to the options available to them, which may include submitting a notification of extenuating circumstances or deferring studies until the following academic year. For implications on assessment, Quality Handbook Section 17A: Notification of Extenuating Circumstances (NEC) policy and process should be considered.